# A REVIEW OF THE STATE OF THE BRITISH NATION.

Thursday, January 22. 1708.

WELL, Gentlemen, I hope you will excuse us making one Paper for your Mirth, tho' it be by a Digression from the ſerious Subject I am upon.

And to ſatisfie your Curioſity, I think, I may begin with the old Song.

*Now at laſt the Riddle is expounded*, &c.

To divert you with ſomething agreeable to this Time of the Year, behold, I gave you an *Ænigma*, and a Prize for the Diſcovery: To tell you, I thought no Body would find it out, had been a Scandal to your own Judgment, and to my own good Manners; it was done to divert you, as well as employ you; and I am far from thinking the Prize ill beſtow'd.

Indeed I muſt complain of one Hardſhip, *viz.* That the Gentlemen out of Town ſhould be ſo very obliging to ſend up their Opinion by the Poſt, and leave the Author to pay the Poſtage; and when I tell you of 14 or 15 Letters of that Kind, you will allow that's a little too hard.

Well, Gentlemen, I am firſt to tell you, that the Riddle was explain'd in a Paper ſeal'd up, and left at the Printer's the ſame Day of its being publiſh'd, and was never open'd but in the Preſence of all that pleaſed to come, and I hope to their Satisfaction.

Next I am to own a Difficulty happen'd by Reaſon of a Miſconſtruction of the Words, ANY PERSON, which ſome would have conſtrued, EVERY PERSON, by which if Twenty or a Hundred had found out the Riddle within the eight Days, they had Each a Title to the three Volumes of the *Review*; but this, I hope, is adjuſted to Satisfaction.

Laſtly,

Laſtly, I am to tell you, that the *Ænigma* was fairly ſolv'd, and the Prize gain'd by a Gentleman, who ſent the very direct Thing in a Letter on the *Mondry* Morning after the Publication, as you ſhall ſee by the Copy of the Solution left ſeal'd as above, and the Gentleman's Letter, both which follow.

The Explanation left with the Printer.

The RIDDLE ſignifies,

THE Firr-Trees *dug out of the Moſſes and Mariſh Grounds in* Lancaſhire, *and ſeveral of our* Northern *Countries, where large Trees are found ſeveral Foot under Ground, entirely cover'd, and are ſuppoſed to have lain there ever ſince the Flood, yet are firm and good, and as full of Sap, as if growing above Ground.*

(a) *They are found ſometimes* 10 *or* 12 *Foot deep, ſometimes much more.*

*Neither* Nature *or* Reaſon *could ſuggeſt their being there, or how they came there.*

(c) *They are ſplit out in ſmall Peices, and are ſo full of Tarr, that the poorer Country People uſe them inſtead of Candles.*

(d) *In* Building; *for drawing of* Tarr *or* Turpentine; *their* Aſhes *for* Glaſs; *and it may be uſed for* Carving, *as other Wood.*

*The* Aſhes *will* melt into Mettal *for* Glaſs, *the* Wood *will burn into* Aſhes.

Fluid, *as above,* (d) *when melted; or fluid in the* Juice, *which is the* Tarr *or* Turpentine; Solid, *as in* Wood.

Round *and* Tall, *the Shape of a Tree.*

Born in the Dark, *i. e. Under-ground*; help to ſee, *ut ſupra,* (c)

Live, *i. e. ſwim in the Water*; (fly) *made into Arrows.*

Subſtance; Aſhes *will vitrifie, but not conſume.*

Grow; *they certainly grow, tho' have no Leaves*; all the Elements *are in the Wood, as in other Sorts.*

Buried, *ut ſupra,* (a) — Turpentine *is Phyſical in many Caſes.*

Wonder; *they are ſtrange, reſpecting the Place they are found in: but not at all ſtrange in themſelves, being a common* Firr.

*They will not grow, if ſett above Ground*; *nor periſh, if bury'd in the ſame Places they are taken out of.*

Drudge; *they ſerve to all the meaneſt and moſt common Uſes of Timber.*

This is the Author's true Meaning.

The Gentleman's Letter who firſt ſolv'd this *Ænigma.*

SIR,

*THere are* Firr-Trees *found under Ground in* Lancaſhire, *and ſeveral other Parts of* of the North, *which anſwer to every Part the Ænigma, and is therefore propoſed as Solution thereof by*

Your Servant,

*Monday,* 11 a Clock.
Jan. 12. 1708.

And. Archer.

I could make this a very diverting Paper, by giving you but a few of about 150 Letters ſent upon this Occaſion to the Author. —Some indeed are very Ingenious, full of Learning, Philoſophy and Sence, among which there are about 20 who gueſs'd it to be *Quick-Silver*, whoſe Letters are too long to inſert here; ſome indeed are full of Mirth and Wit, and of theſe the Two following will I doubt not, pleaſe you as well as did the Authors.

SIR,

*I Have attempted a Solution of your Riddle, which I take to be* Quick-Silver; *if I have nam'd the Thing, you'll pleaſe to excuſe the Poetry.*

*Bright* Hermes *like Tobacco-Pick,*
*Deſtroys the Sound, reſtores the Sick;*
*Diverts the Town in pleaſing Riddle,*
*And dances Jiggs without a Fiddle:*
*Plays* Chriſtmas *Gambols in our News,*
*And helps th' Expounder to Reviews.*

January, 12.
1708.

And

And now for a true Tarr, I cannot but do Juſtice to the honeſt Botſwain about *Wapping Dock*, whoſe Letter is ſo merry and ſo honeſt, that I cannot leave it out.

*Jan.* 15. *6 Glaſſes of the 3d Watch out.*

I'LL *warrant, Mr.* Review, *you value your ſelf hugely, upon the tangled Piece of Rope you have thrown in the Ingenious to quail. Oh! how this* Samſonite *would vaunt and ſtrut, could no Body find the End on't; he'd top his Mizenpeak and Boliſprit too, if he could, and look as great as Bull's Beef, or a Biſquet of Breweſs. But know, to the Mortification of thy Pride, that I a poor Sailor, a meer Tarpaulin, a wild Beaſt of the Wilderneſs of Waters, having ſpent not half a Watch on conſidering upon your Riddle, (for whatever Cramp Name you give it, I take that to be the Meaning of it) found out that it could be nothing elſe but* Quick Silver, *Tho' I don't expect to carry the Prize, (for I did not ſee your* Review *till to day, and it being ſo eaſie a Thing to reſolve, no doubt, but ſomebody has hit the Mark before me) yet I could not forbear telling you, that the hidden Myſteries of Truth are often revealed to Babes, yea, Fools, and ſo Brother, Farewell.*

From Wapping-Dock.

F. L.

Some have gueſs'd it to be *Iron*, ſome *Salt*, Abundance *Sea-Coal*, ſome the Letter *K*, ſome *I*, ſome *Brimſtone*, ſome *Sulphur*, according to the Exhalations of their Fancies; One very ingenious Letter with all its Deſcriptions determines it to be *Reaſon*, another *the Soul*, another *Faith*, another *the corrupted Will*; ſome will have it to be the *Devil*, *tho' by the Way*, I never heard he was to be *dug out of the Earth*, if I miſtake not, he is rather found on the *Surface*; another ſays it is a *Maidenhead*, but I ſuppoſe, that Gentleman forgot that it was SOLID; Three or Four ſay it is *Gold*, but they, I believe, did not ſtudy the Difficulty of *Pulveriſing*, which our Atheiſts raiſe as an Objection againſt the Story of *Aaron's* Calf; ſome have aſſur'd us it was FIRE, but how they can make that *melt into Metal*, is not joyn'd to the Opinion; one Gentleman ſays it is a *Gun*, but where the Difficulty lies in Nature and Reaſon of having a *Gun* be found in the Earth, I ſuppoſe he did not conſider—One Gentleman well known, but Names are none of our Buſineſs, has beſtow'd ſome more Poetry upon it, as follows,

*If* Argent Vive *Be ſtill alive,*
*When bury'd or above,*
*If it can fly by Help of Fire,*
*As ſwift as any Doue;*
*If common it be as Raſcals we ſee,*
*On every Looking-Glaſs;*
*If high as a Tree, we commonly ſee,* Barometer.
*When* Hot *unto* Cold *doth paſs;*
*If in Pocky Diſeaſes, the Sick it well pleaſes,*
*And cures, yet has no Compaſſion.*
*If the Gallant and Brave their Noſes it ſave,*
*'Tis the ſcandalous Slave of the Nation.* Truly mine
*Then this my Review is ſteady and true,* Promiſe.
*The Sirte of the whole* Britiſh Nation.

*If the Ænigma be hereby reſolved, then I expect at the End of eight Days the Volumes of* Reviews, *and may preſent ſome other Volumes to lay in the Library in room of 'em.*

January, 15.
1708.

T. E.

At laſt, Gentlemen, here are a Couple of wiſe Men met in a Gueſs, which to me is as much an *Ænigma* as the Riddle it ſelf, and theſe will have it be the Author of the *Review* himſelf, meer *D. F.* the very Father of the Bratt: But here ariſe ſuch a World of Incongruities, that I cannot imagine how they can get them to hit. As, (1.) how can they tell that I can ſwim; (2.) as for *burning like a Candle*; and (3.) *for flying in the Air*, I muſt beg their Pardon for the Experiment; again, (4.) as to Melting me, and (5.) Calcining me, I hope, they don't deſign to vitrifie me into a Looking-Glaſs, and ſo ſet me up for a ſtanding REVIEW; theſe Gentlemen are therefore deſir'd to explain themſelves for farther Satisfaction, for who knows what wicked Deſign may lie hid under ſuch wonderful Gueſſes as theſe.

As

As to a certain Gentleman, whoſe Thoughts run ſo much upon a Gallows, that he could think of nothing fitter to explain the Riddle by; there are ſo many unhappy Likeneſſes and Unlikeneſſes alſo in it, that I can ſay little but this to him, It ſeems to me, that a Gibbet would come much nearer the Riddle, if a Thief hung at the End of it——Ware the Experiment.

At laſt comes a very ingenious Gentleman, and by a *Poſthumus* Letter, tells us, that he will have it ſignifie *nothing at all*— But in ſhort, that is a very *ſilly thing*— And this Gentleman has given this worthy Character of his own Judgment, *that he was among the Gueſſers, and yet from the Beginning imagin'd it could not be fairly applicable to any thing.* Now, if this Gentleman knew it ſignify'd nothing, and yet gueſs'd it ſignify'd ſomething, I leave it to his own Deciſion, who deſerves the Cap, *He* or *I*.

Really, Gentlemen, this Ridule has made us ſo merry, that tho' I laugh but on one Side of my Mouth, having three Volumes of the *Reviews* to give for the Diverſion, yet I think to hazard once more, and when I have a little Room for it, ſhall beſtow another *Ænigma* upon you.

*Theſe are to give Notice,*

THat *MARY KIRLEUS*, the Widow of *JOHN KIRLEUS*, Son of Dr. *THO. KIRLEUS*, a Sworn-Phyſician, in ordinary to King *Charles* II. Sells (rightly prepar'd) his Famous Drink and Pills; experienc'd above 50 Years to cure all Ulcers, Sores, Scabs, Itch, Scurf, Scurvies, Leproſies, Running of the Reins, and the moſt inveterate VENEREAL Diſeaſe, with all its attending Symptoms, without Fluxing, Confinement, or deſtructive Mercurial Preparations: Theſe incomparable Medicines need no Words to expreſs their Virtues; the many miſerable One that have been happily cured, after gives over by others, ſufficiently recommend them as the moſt Sovereign Remedy in the World againſt all ſuch Malignities: She cures many after Fluxing, and in Compaſſion to the diſtreſſed, will deal according to the Patient's Ability. The Drink is 3 *s.* the Quart, the Pill 1 *s.* the Box, with Directions, and Advice *Gratis*.

†††† *She lives at the Golden-Ball in Hand Court, over againſt great Turnſtile in Holborn.*

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